

Advocates a State Department Under New General Legislation to Advance "Home Rule" Interests

The question of general legislation that it will be necessary for the next general assembly of North Carolina to enact owing to the revision of the state constitution through ratification of amendments at the last general election seems to be coming more and more into public consideration. There has been already considerable discussion of what this legislation is to be regarding cities and towns of the state, incorporated municipalities; and the State Municipal association has appointed a special committee to meet in Raleigh during the week beginning December 13 and canvass laws of other States and receive suggestions, preparatory to drafting such general legislation.

Mayer Thomas J. Murphy, of Greensboro, is president of this state association and has taken a very active part in bringing the work to its present stage. A few weeks ago Mr. Murphy contributed a special article to the Greensboro News in which he discussed the situation in a general way; and, incidentally, advocated a "home rule" government for the state's cities and towns, believing that in such a government there lies the greatest possibilities of their advancement. He takes this idea still further now and advocates a department of state for the supervision of county, city and community government, as an aid to the community "home rule."

With this following up to a central idea too, there comes a reminder to the people of the state that the adoption of four constitutional amendments on November 7 vitally affects the county as a unit, as it does the city or town. Mr. Murphy makes the suggestion, too, that the county commissioners of the state, as an organization, take this big question under advisement and join with the Municipal association in working out general laws that will facilitate political government, it is city, town or community, to the best interest of the community as a whole. His suggestion of a state department to supervise such government, it would seem, could easily be applicable to all local governments, regardless of unit size; and communities would thus be freed still more from their dependence for progress and needful measures on the state's legislature, which meets but every two years.

Unfortunately for the public Mr. Murphy does not go into a discussion of this proposition in detail; but what he has to say is concise and pointed. The man who has the inclination to do some thinking for himself may take it as a basis upon which to work out the problem for himself; and it appears that the Greensboro mayor is anxious

for this very thing to transpire. He wants the people to think; to think as they are not always wont to do. The situation before them is one that, in solution, must control the affairs of their state in future, and either add impetus to or serve as an impediment upon its progress. He believes that men should think; and when they have reached a conclusion they should give their fellows the benefit through a public discussion. It is in such manner, he thinks, that the best may be attained; and since North Carolina communities have opened to them the door of opportunity in the adoption of these amendments, it should not be lightly closed in the passage of inefficient or damaging general legislation.

But let Mr. Murphy speak for himself:

"Believing that the public discussion of public affairs is the best way to arrive at what is best in government, and as the recent constitutional amendments have made it necessary for some general laws to be passed by the incoming legislature, and since the special committee appointed by the State Municipal association desires discussion and suggestions concerning these matters, I believe the newspapers of the state would do a great service to the people in getting the views of different men throughout the state upon the subject of local or community government."

"Taking into consideration the fact that counties and townships, together with the cities and towns, are affected by the amendments, which preclude legislation by the general assembly on a great many matters of local government, it would seem necessary to establish a department of state for the special handling and supervision of matters of county, city and community government. This would be all the more necessary in view of the many minor amendments that would be asked for continually in regard to the various charters of the cities and towns. It would be easy enough for any city or town to adopt a uniform charter or one of several uniform charters prescribed by the legislature, but if it had to have a vote of the people on every minor amendment to its charter, progress might be impaired thereby. It seems that a department of state that could keep a record of all the charters for cities and towns, and county and township laws passed by the various boards of commissioners, should also have power to issue amendments to charters upon petition filed by the governing body of the city, town or community after giving due time for protest by the citizens and full consideration and hearing of the matter. Such

a department could be organized independently or under the secretary of state as the business would seem to justify.

"It would seem that without some department of this kind to continually give attention to matters of city, county and community government our condition would not be improved, because we would have to wait until the legislature met in order to change the general law, if our community needs could not be met under the said law."

"On the other hand, if we avail ourselves to the fullest extent of the opportunities offered by the first and fourth amendments to the constitution by establishing a department of county, city and community government, properly organized and adequately equipped, it will mean more for the upbuilding and progress of the various counties, cities, towns and townships of North Carolina than anything that has occurred in our state government in many years. And I would suggest that the county commissioners association appoint a committee to study the matters and make suggestions to the legislature in conjunction with the committee recently appointed by the cities of the state. I would also urge the various city and town officials to study the matter and make suggestions to the committee which meets in Raleigh December 13 to 23, for the purpose of considering this matter in a practical way."—Greensboro Daily News.

RICHEST MAN IN THE WORLD.

Not Rockefeller, Rothschild, Morgan, nor Krupp. The richest man in the world is no mere multi-millionaire, whose wealth can be estimated by income tax experts. It is the Czar of Russia, and no man living knows his wealth. His income is said to be a million or so dollars a day, which enables one to estimate roughly something like ten to thirty billions as the sum of his possessions, and this is largely guess work.

As head of the church, he contracts the church property amounting to billions. He owns in his name 150,000,000 acres of land, comprising timber mines an agricultural lands sufficient to furnish food to seven such a nation. He receives from the state, or government, a salary of \$10,000,000 a year.

The Czar pays more than his own expenses. He maintains his palaces and royal residences, a hundred or so, and takes care of the cost of the household of all the royal personages of the nation. This involved some 30,000 servants, 3000 automobiles, 5,000 horses, and a small army of soldiers and secret service men. Plainly he needs the money.

From the mines of Siberia he derives a royalty upon every ounce of mineral mined. The agricultural lands are rented, and the forests are being worked up into lumber.—Wall Street Journal.

RAILROAD EARNINGS ENORMOUS.

An editorial in the December Farm and Fireside says:

"We only need to hark back a few months to hear the ever-recurring refrain of hard luck coming strong from the railroads, telling of growing expenses and insufficient income to make their operating ends meet. Of course the only way out of their ruinous predicament is rate-raising! Just now their time-worn refrain has temporarily died away, and here is the reason: The net earnings of all railroads in this country for the entire fiscal year was over \$3,000,000 greater than for the fiscal year ending in 1915. This, be it remembered, is net earnings, not gross earnings, in excess of the fiscal year preceding, as reported by no less an authority than 'The Financial and Commercial Chronicle.'"

"The net earnings for all the railroads of this country for the past fiscal year totaled the staggering sum of \$1,207,632,601. The same high authority reports that never before in the history of our railroads has there been such large railroad earnings, both gross and net incomes, as during the present year. Even though railroad operating expenses are steadily advancing, shippers must be shown why a \$300,000,000 increase in net earnings will not take care of all advancing expenses and still leave a fat profit for the railroad companies."

TEARING UP RAILROADS TO BE USED IN FRANCE

Canada has begun to tear up 1,000 miles of railway to meet the needs of the war on the western front in France and Belgium. The rails will be shipped to France, where they will be used to facilitate the movement of troops, guns, munitions and supplies from French ports to the fighting line. Laborers now are at work tearing up 300 miles of government railway sidings and it has been decided to remove 220 miles of rails between Edmonton and the Pacific coast, where the Canadian Northern and Grand Pacific run parallel.

It was impossible to obtain new rails, owing to the great demand for steel to manufacture shells. Soldiers will be employed to tear up the rails when laborers cannot be employed it was stated.

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Armour Star hams, formerly 25c, now..... 23c per lb
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Spanish mackerels, originally 10c each, now..... 3 for 25c

Coffees

Tip-Top Coffee, put up exclusively for Tip-Top Grocery Co., sold formerly for 35c, now..... 29c
Votan Coffee, regular 35c coffee, now..... 25c
Maxwell House Coffee, regular 35c, now..... 30c
Faus Coffee, regular 40c coffee now..... 35c
Monogram, regular 3 lb for \$1.00 seller, 3 lbs for..... 99c
Sun-kist raisins, regular 15c lb now..... 13c
Prunes, regular 15c straight, now..... 13c
Fancy Cluster raisins, regular 20c kind now..... 17c per lb
Regular 30c size package Currents only..... 25c
Block Honey, regular 25c per lb now..... 22c
Park Syrup, rock candy and maple, regular 25c seller for..... 22c
Yellow Cling Peaches, regular 25c can now..... 20c
Princess canned pineapple, regular 25c size for..... 20c
Sun-Kissed Corn, regular 15c seller, now 2 for..... 25c
Deviled Crabs, regular 40c size now..... 35c
Bannans, always heretofore 25c per dozen now..... 20c
Oranges, Indian River, 35c kind..... 30c per doz
Nuts of all kinds, regular 30c kind..... 25c
Crystallized citron, regular 25c kind..... 23c
PLUM PUDDING.
Canned Seedless raisins, regular 20c size now..... 15c
Blue Star Peas, regular 15c size, now..... 12c
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